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# the Gull

Volume 60

Berkeley, Calif.

June 1978

Number 6

## Annual Dinner in June

The June membership meeting will be our annual dinner, to be held this year on June 9 in San Francisco at the Great Electric Underground in the financial district. See last month's *Gull* for full details or call the GGAS office (843-2222) for more information.

We are looking forward to an entertaining program presented by Gary Bogue, to good food and good fellowship.

Use the coupon on page 75 to make your reservation.

## Field Trips Calendar

**Saturday and Sunday, June 3-4 — Yosemite National Park with George Peyton.** For details, see the May *Gull*. (✓)

**Wednesday, June 14 — Mini trip to Redwood Regional Park.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Claremont Hotel parking lot off Ashby Ave. We will explore and bird gently sloping areas. Lunch optional. Leader: Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Saturday and Sunday, June 17-18 — Yuba Pass and vicinity for birds of the Sierra.** Take Interstate 80 to Truckee, turn north on Hwy. 89 and drive 25 miles to Sierraville. Take Hwy. 49 west to the Wild Plum Road Campground, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from Sierra City where we will meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. You can also go by way of Auburn, Grass Valley and Downieville on Hwy. 49 to Sierra City. The Wild Plum Campground is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east.

For those who wish to camp, the Wild Plum and Chapman Campgrounds (Yuba Pass summit) are on Hwy. 49. Motels available in

Sierra City: Buttes Motel (916 862-1170), Herrington Sierra Pines (916 862-1151), Bassett Station Motel (916 862-1297), Yuba River Inn (916 862-1122), Sierra Buttes Inn Hotel (public bath only; 916 862-1191) or Sierra Chalet (916 862-1110). In Sierraville, try Canyon Ranch (916 994-3340). On Sunday we will meet at the intersection of Hwys. 49 and 89 at 7:30 a.m. Leader: Peter Allen (548-4592). (✓)

**Wednesday, June 21** — Mini trip to **Audubon Canyon Ranch** to see the nesting herons and egrets. Meet at the Ranch (on Hwy. 1 about four miles north of Stinson Beach) at **10 a.m.** You may observe the rookery from below or walk up to the overlook. Bring lunch and we'll go to the nearby Audubon Volunteer Canyon Ranch. We will be shown the energy conserving features built into their Environmental Education Center. Further information and rides, call Hap Fraser (661-8891, San Francisco) or Ruth Voss (525-8032, Berkeley). (✓)

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 23-25** — **Lassen State Park.** See details in the May *Gull*. Leader, Dan Murphy. (✓)

**Sunday, July 9** — **Chimney Rock, Pt. Reyes.** Meet at **9 a.m.** at the National Seashore headquarters' parking lot. We will car pool to the parking lot at Chimney Rock for a two-mile walk out to the point to look for nesting Black Oystercatchers and gulls. Bring lunch. Leader: Barry Spitz (454-2769). (✓)

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 14-16** — **from Tioga Pass east.** A trip to explore alpine meadows, lush canyons, sagebrush hills and the western shore of Mono Lake. Short, leisurely hikes at 5,000 to 10,000 foot elevations. Final itinerary depends on snow and mosquito conditions at time of trip. Call leader in late June for further information. Meet on **Friday, July 14**, at **2 p.m.**, and **Saturday, July 15**, at **9 a.m.** at the intersection of Hwy. 120 (Tioga Pass Road leading through Yosemite) and Hwy. 395, just south of Lee Vining. Bring insect repellent, hiking shoes and camera for breathtaking scenery. Good campgrounds in Lee Vining Canyon; good motels in Lee Vining. Leader: Marie Mans (284-7681). (✓)

**Carpooling:** You can arrange for carpooling by calling Kate Partridge at 849-1951 (home) or 642-5784 (work: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.) for trips marked (✓). Passengers should be willing to share all expenses incident to the trips including mileage and any additional costs, such as bridge tolls, parking or entrance fees.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

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## Conservation Notes

**HAWAIIAN HUMPBACKS.** Increased human activity and population growth are threatening Hawaiian breeding grounds of the endangered humpback whale. The only U.S. territorial waters where these large baleen whales breed and calve are the channel areas between the islands of Maui, Lanai and Kahoolawe. A proposed marine sanctuary there would protect critical breeding and calving habitat from further human incursion and help protect this endangered marine mammal.

Letters of support for the sanctuary concept should be addressed to: Cdr. Phillip C. Johnson, Officer in Charge, National Marine Sanctuaries Program, Office of Coastal Zone Management, 3300 Whitehaven St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 30325.

**AUTO-TAX TRAILS AND BOBCAT PROTECTION.** A bill to provide \$14 million for hiking and cycling trails linking units of the state park system was passed this spring by the Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee. The bill (S.B. 1359) was sponsored by Senator John Nejedly and would authorize an increase of the automobile registration tax by one dollar, which would fund the trail system.

Another bill in the same committee, S.B. 1581, would provide legal protection for the bobcat, a creature whose populations in California have been rapidly declining since the recent escalation of fur prices.

**FOREST SERVICE HERBICIDES.** The U.S. Forest Service, as of May 1, continues to spray national forests throughout the state with poisonous herbicides. These chemical sprays are 2,4,5-T, Silvex and 2,4-D. They are proven to cause cancer, birth defects and liver disease in mice. They are toxic to fish and wildlife, they contaminate the water and air in the area and beyond and they make their way up the food chain. Senator Peter Behr has introduced a bill, S.B. 1357, that would ban this practice.

**BLM WILDERNESS.** Beginning in May and continuing over the next several months, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be conducting an intensive inventory of wilderness resources in the California desert. The purpose is to identify areas suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness system. The BLM will conduct public meetings and workshops throughout the state for input from interested persons, so please watch for announcements. If you are interested in receiving all information and materials pertaining to the desert wilderness program, send a card with your name and address to: Bureau of Land Management, Riverside District Office, 1695 Spruce St., Riverside, CA 92507.

The Sierra Club has prepared a handbook on the BLM's Wilderness Review Program. The BLM Organic Act mandated the Bureau to

review *all* roadless lands within its jurisdiction and make recommendations as to their suitability for wilderness designation.

Persons interested in protecting BLM roadless areas should write to the Sierra Club and request a copy of "BLM Wilderness Citizen's Handbook." Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Sierra Club, 530 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94108.

**GGP MASTER PLAN.** The San Francisco Parks and Recreation Commission is going ahead with its Master Plan for Golden Gate Park. No specific plans have yet been drawn, but the Commission will hold public workshops this month in The City to invite suggestions and consider proposals. If you're interested, watch for announcements in local papers and plan to attend.

**PT. REYES ELK.** The National Park Service has completed and approved a plan for the reintroduction of Tule Elk to Pt. Reyes National Seashore. The 2600-acre designated area is bounded on one side by Tomales Bay, on another by the Pacific Ocean. The two land sides will be fenced. Pt. Reyes is choice open elk habitat, including brushy side slopes where the cows can find the privacy needed for calving. The Pt. Reyes herd will start with ten to twelve surplus animals from Tule Elk State Reserve at Tupman and will grow on its own to whatever proves to be capacity. The Park Service, which manages the land, would like to see the reintroduction of natural predators, coyotes and cougars, but the California Department of Fish and Game, which manages the elk herds, is opposed, fearing marauding of adjacent ranches.

**GRAND CANYON.** The National Park Service has released a management plan for Grand Canyon National Park. The most controversial aspect is the proposed phasing out, over a three-year period, of outboard motors for float trips through the canyon. The Park Service plan would also institute stricter procedures for fires, waste disposal and trails, which are necessary for environmental protection along the river.

River trip outfitters, who have increased the number of motorized float trips greatly in the past few years, have strongly protested the proposed motor ban.

**FT. FUNSTON SWALLOWS.** The only significant breeding colony of Bank Swallows in the Bay Area is being threatened by erosion. The swallows, as they probably have for centuries, nest in sand cliffs at Ft. Funston, now part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Their cliff-side habitat is being steadily eroded and is becoming accessible to dogs and other predators.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

## Preview a Public Shoreline

You and your friends and other interested persons are cordially invited to preview the new Bay Farm Island public shoreline on Saturday, June 3. The three-mile sandy walk, covering areas not yet developed or open to the public, will start at 1:30 p.m. near the fishing pier at the end of the Bay Farm Island bridge.

Hosts for this event will be the Harbor Bay Isle (HBI) developers and the Save Our Shoreline (SOS) activists. For more information, call Leora Feeney at 522-8525.

The Saturday walk is the culmination of more than a year of concentrated confrontation and negotiation involving the developers, Alameda elected officials and city staffers and the hundreds of Alameda citizens who joined together to "Save Our Shoreline."

The conflict was first brought to the attention of *Gull* readers in the April, 1977, issue in an article headlined "Bay Farm Island Shore Threatened" which reported that the HBI development planned to build houses on nearly half of the property that had been described in the project's Environmental Impact Report as "a continuous band of open space 100 feet wide along the shoreline open to the public . . . 32.6 acres."

The City Council favored preserving shoreline for the public but felt that a 100-foot band might be more than was needed. Concerned Alameda citizens quickly formed a group called Save Our Shoreline, the objective of which was to protect the EIR 100-foot band and also to provide the public pressure that apparently was necessary to counteract the influence of the developers.

More than 1,100 Alameda residents signed a petition calling for the 100-foot band. This petition helped delay a City Council decision on the developer's offer of a shoreline park ranging in width from 35 to 65 feet, which HBI shortly thereafter increased to a minimum width of 50 feet.

SOS then prepared a slide presentation documenting the need for an adequate buffer zone between home owners' property and public use and arguing that a 50-foot band was insufficient.

In mid-July, the Alameda Planning Board formulated a shoreline definition which SOS believed had merit but which city staffers recommended be rejected by the City Council as being excessive.

Prior to the final public hearing which was scheduled for August 2, SOS sent postcards urging everyone who had signed the petition favoring the 100-foot band to attend the meeting.

Council chambers were jammed, every seat was taken and persons were standing in the aisle, sitting on the floor and spreading into the

lobby. Presentations were made by all interested parties, after which a ten-minute break was announced. Tension was great.

The final decision was a unanimous vote to support the Planning Board's recommendation. This called for an average of 100 feet along the northwest shore (rip-rap edge), a minimum of 100 feet on the north shore (marsh edge) except for one small section, and the inclusion of two small parks.

Despite this apparent victory, there was no cause as yet for celebration because of the developer's suggestion that the city buy all but one acre of the shoreline park. More controversy followed, but an amicable solution was eventually achieved when the developers agreed to dedicate the 14 acres which will compromise the shoreline park.

See you there on June 3.

## **Yosemite - Off the Beaten Track**

Though much of the boundless land of northern Yosemite and the surrounding national forests is a backpacker's paradise, many places rich in bird life can be reached by walking just a mile or two off the beaten track. Numerous side roads and trails are waiting to be explored by alert birdwatchers who like to find their own "Sierra specialties" — rather than looking for them at some staked-out spot.

The area included here reaches from Crane Flat to Hetch Hetchy Dam. The road to Hetch Hetchy is accessible most of the year. Depending on snow conditions, Tuolumne Grove Road may open as early as April 15 or as late as June 15. (1978 promises to be a very late season.) The lower portion of that road and Hodgdon Meadow are usually negotiable on foot by early April.

Most of the place names given in this article are on the Park map available at the entrance stations. For a complete list of birds refer to the Yosemite Bird List or to the comprehensive review of vegetation zones and birds in "*Birds of the Yosemite Sierra*" (David Gaines, California Syllabus, Oakland, 1977). Both are available at the Park's visitors' centers. Only birds that often elude the casual visitor will be included in my article. Unless otherwise mentioned, all remarks refer to the breeding season.

*Remember — please stay on established trails or deer paths as much as possible. Do not trample down fragile vegetation, especially in mountain meadows.*

### **Crane Flat to Big Oak Flat entrance station via Tuolumne Road**

Crane Flat is at the junction of the Big Oak Flat Road with the Tioga Road (Hwy. 120). The meadows are well known for their Great Gray

Owls. At dusk, look for them in the open (cheek logs); during the day look just inside the forest edge. August and September are best. Vaux Swifts are often seen here in spring and summer, but no nest has yet been found. *Empidonax* flycatchers in the fir forest surrounding the meadows are most likely Hammond's. Listen for their call notes as well as their song. For a detailed description of this spot, refer to Stephen Bailey's site guide in *BIRDING*, VII, May/June 1975.

From Crane Flat take the *Tuolumne Grove Auto Nature Trail* (one way, downhill). Hermit Warblers are common breeding birds as you enter the dense forest. Stop at the Giant Sequoia Grove parking lot and listen for the similar calls of the Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers in the stillness of these majestic trees. Another mile down the road, two of the more famous songsters in the U.S., Hermit Thrush and Townsend's Solitaire, occasionally sing at the same time (May). As you descend further, Solitary Vireos, Nashville and MacGillivray's Warblers nest in the deciduous understory of the forest. At the picnic site along North Crane Creek (4 miles from Crane Flat) two species more typical of the moist coastal forest regularly summer: Winter Wren and Western Flycatcher, the latter for ready comparison with Hammond's Flycatcher in the same vicinity.

At Hodgdon Meadow, less than a mile further, two other *Empidonax* can occasionally be compared: Willow (Traill's) Flycatcher along the creek and Dusky associated with the dry shrubbery along the forest edge. The willows along the creek are also a good place for Calliope Hummingbirds in early summer and for hordes of transient hummingbirds and warblers in August and September. In April and May, Purple and Cassin's Finches can be seen and heard around the residences near the meadow (Cassin's largely disappear in early June).

Most species common in montane forest habitats nest around the *Hodgdon Meadow Campground*, located one-half mile before the Tuolumne Grove Road rejoins Hwy. 120 at the Big Oak Flat entrance station. If you do not see a Pileated Woodpecker and White-headed Woodpecker while camping here or at the Crane Flat Campground, you really have been unlucky.

### **Big Oak Flat entrance station to Hetch Hetchy**

One mile north of the entrance station, take *Evergreen Road* to "Mather and Hetch Hetchy." Look for Dippers as you cross the South Fork of the Tuolumne River (first bridge; good fishing here in the spring). In the cut-over national forest land along this road, Chestnut-backed Chickadees have been seen in spring (nesting has yet to be substantiated in Yosemite). White-headed Woodpeckers are common and the similar songs of Hermit and Black-throated Gray Warblers can occasionally be compared.

The nine-mile drive to Hetch Hetchy Dam is not recommended during the hot summer and fall months, but it is interesting in spring and winter. Stop at *Akerson Meadows* (a sign will show location, but it is private property); listen for Willow Flycatchers and explore the edges of meadow and forest. Mountain Bluebirds, Red Crossbills and Lawrence's Goldfinches have been seen here in early spring. The meadows around the San Francisco Recreation Camp at Mather are a good place to explore.

As you re-enter Yosemite National Park above the dam, most species typical of the Oak/Digger Pine belt will be found, including Canyon Wren and Nuttall's Woodpecker. Mountain Quail are common on the upper slopes. Pygmy Owls can easily be coaxed out of the forested canyons and you may find a water-related species on the reservoir that is not on the Park list. (Report any new species found to Park Headquarters.) Bird life along the banks of the Tuolumne River below the dam, reached by trail down the steep canyon, is waiting to be explored by some enterprising soul. This would be of particular interest in light of recent proposals for a new dam along the Tuolumne.

Great Gray Owls, Williamson's Sapsucker and Goshawks have been seen along the Hetch Hetchy road in winter and early spring (March).

If you return to Yosemite via Hwy. 120, stop at the turnoff to the *Crane Flat Lookout*, about one-half mile before reaching Crane Flat. Walk along the fire road leading southwest (away from the lookout). This is one of the best places to see Green-tailed Towhees west of the mountains; there are also Fox Sparrows, Dusky Flycatchers, MacGillivray's Warblers.

If you find the Crane Flat and Hodgdon campgrounds too crowded, drive three miles east on the Tioga Pass Road from Crane Flat to the turnoff to *Tamarack Flat Campground*. This usually uncrowded camp is located two miles down the spur road. Listen for Spotted Owls, Pygmy Owls, Poor-wills and coyotes.

A private campground, "Yosemite Lakes," with showers and store is located along Hwy. 120 five miles west of the Big Oak Flat entrance station. The closest motel, Sugar Pine Ranch, Groveland, CA 95321, is twenty miles further west on that highway.

—MARIE L. MANS

Editor's note: This article covers only a portion of the territory Marie had originally planned to describe. "To do it all would have filled the entire *Gull!*" she said. Happily for us all, she promises to write further about those areas of north Yosemite not included here.

## Summer Birding Classes

Stephen Bailey will teach two classes in Field Ornithology through the Albany Adult School during the six-week summer session. Both classes will emphasize techniques of field observation and description of birds and their behavior while teaching recognition of California birds and bird identification. Each week includes a classroom session and a field session. Various bird habitats will be visited.

The Beginning class will meet 9-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and 8-11 a.m. Wednesday (field) starting Tuesday, June 20. Intermediate class (for people who have observed some birds previously) meets on Thursday, 7-9:30 p.m. and 8-12 a.m. Saturday (field), beginning Thursday, June 22.

Mike Rivers will teach a class entitled "Birds of the San Francisco Bay Area." It will have field sessions only on Fridays, 9-12 a.m., beginning June 23.

For more information call the school at 526-6811.

## Pelagic Trips for the Fall

Boat trips leaving from Monterey Harbor to view sea birds and marine mammals are scheduled for September 17, October 2 and October 8. Past trips have produced sightings of albatross, shearwaters, petrels, jaegers, alcids, dolphins, whales and other species of birds and marine mammals not usually seen from land. Reservations may be made by sending \$15 per person to: Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705. Make checks payable to the Golden Gate Audubon Society and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Details on when and where to meet will be mailed with confirmation notices.

For more information call the GGAS office at 843-2222.

## Workshops: Sierra and Cape May

### Sierra Natural History Workshop at Golden Trout Camp

Once again, this unusual workshop, sponsored by the Santa Barbara, Pasadena and San Fernando Valley chapters of National Audubon Society, will be held at Golden Trout Camp, located at 10,000 feet elevation in the Southern Sierra out of Lone Pine, California.

There is no road to the camp and guests hike in three miles, carrying their own sleeping bags and personal belongings. Meals and tents are provided. Study-hikes in the nearby meadow, forest and alpine regions are led by qualified naturalists.

Three week-long sessions will start July 23, July 30 and August 6. Cost is \$90. Sign-up deadline is July 1.

For brochure or more information, write Mrs. Tomi Sollen, 825 N. Soledad, Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

## Five Days at Cape May, New Jersey

A birding workshop will be held at Camp May, New Jersey, September 22-26. Northwest winds associated with high pressure weather systems and the peninsular or "funnel" topography of the south Jersey coast combine to concentrate fall migrants in great numbers and variety at Cape May Point. The leaders write that "on an average day at this season birds are abundant and extraordinarily visible; on a good day it's the same but more, and an excellent day is simply off the charts by standards prevailing anywhere."

Leaders will be Will Russell, Davis Finch and Rich Stallecup. Cost is \$150 from Cape May, with lodging and workshop events included.

For more information write: Northeast Birding, Seal Harbor, Maine 04675.

## Environmental Research

Would you like to participate in a study of the effects of wilderness and urban environments? If you are planning a backpacking trip or a vacation in an urban area, anytime from June until October, your help in an effort to understand how people respond to wilderness and urban environments would be appreciated. You would be asked to fill out a packet of materials while at home and another set while on your trip. Overall, it will take about three hours of your time. If you think you might be interested, please call Bruce Feingold at 527-4972 or 849-4379 or send your name and telephone number to 814 Cornell Ave., Albany, CA 94706.

## A Literary Lifer

For delightful prose, absolutely civilized and beautifully crafted, E. B. White's essays can't be topped. His familiarity with nature's intricacies and individuals is often apparent. For birders, a special treat is contained in the pages of the essay "Mr. Forbush's Friends." Edward Howe Forbush, ornithologist and author of "Birds of Massachusetts" is the subject. I guarantee you a wonderful field trip and one you can repeat any time you wish. "*Essays of E. B. White*" (Harper and Row, 1977).

—NANCY CONZETT, *Editor*

## **Gifts and Bequests**

### **FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH**

**In memory of**  
Frank T. White

**Gift of**  
George Peyton

### **FOR GGAS**

“To Preserve a Marsh”

**In memory of**  
Frank T. White

Lenore and Bob Johnsen  
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Memorial and honorary gifts and bequests will be used as specified by the donors. Acknowledgement will be made in *The Gull* and personally by the Corresponding Secretary, Minnie Groshong. Please send checks made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society to: Corresponding Secretary, GGAS, 2718 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705. All gifts are tax deductible.

### **Annual Dinner**

Please make checks payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society, and mail to the GGAS office at 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705 along with the coupon below. Tickets will not be sent. Your cancelled check is your receipt.

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Golden Gate Audubon Society Annual Dinner  
Friday, June 9th, 1978 6:30 p.m.  
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June 1978

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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to the GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL. Monthly meetings: third Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$15 per year (individual); \$18 (family); includes AUDUBON Magazine and THE GULL; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving THE GULL. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to THE GULL separately \$3 per year; single issues 30¢. High school and college student membership \$8.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$12.00; senior citizen family, \$15.00.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

**The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**